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TWO DISCOURSES

UPON THE

TRIAL OF THE SPIRITS.

SERMON THE SECOND;

PREACHED AT

THE PARISH CHURCH OF UPPER CHELSEA.

BY THE

REV. HENRY BLUNT, M.A.,

RECTOR;

LATE FELLOW OF PEMBROKE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE; AND CHAPLAIN
TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF RICHMOND.

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A SERMON.

1 JOHN IV. 1.

“ BELOVED, BELIEVE NOT EVERY SPIRIT, BUT TRY THE SPIRITS WHETHER THEY BE OF GOD.”

IN resuming the important subject in which we are engaged, we shall consider, that two points have been already established, viz., 1. That those *testimonies of Scripture* upon which the opinion that extraordinary gifts were intended as the abiding heritage of the Church has been chiefly grounded, by no means justify such a conclusion; and, 2. That the *testimony of the Church*, so far at least as may be gathered from the opinions of those holy men of old whose sentiments have been handed down to us,

entirely discountenances any such assumption.

But there is yet another point upon which the experience of the Church is valuable in enabling us to form a conclusive opinion upon the pretensions to miraculous or extraordinary gifts. It is this. That we learn by its experience, that these pretensions are no new things ; that in different ages of the Church men have arisen laying claim to precisely the same powers, and demanding for their warnings and denunciations the same implicit respect, declaring that they spake not merely under those ordinary influences of the Divine Spirit which every Christian is instructed to seek, but as passive instruments in the hands of that Spirit, who dictated to them every message, every warning, every word. These claims have, whenever advanced, been made the subject of strict and impartial investigation by the orthodox members of the Church of God ; in all ages the spirits have been tried, and it is not too

much to add, that in all ages, having been “weighed in the balance” of the sanctuary, “they have been found wanting.”

If it be necessary to offer any apology for occupying the time of a Christian congregation with facts and opinions respecting these pretenders and heretics of former days, the following most sound and judicious sentiments of the truly eminent and pious Baxter, may not be without their use: “I must confess,” he says in his treatise upon ‘the sin against the Holy Ghost,’ “it is my opinion that we have been much to blame in not making known to common Christians somewhat more of the nature of the heresies of the first ages and the effects of them, by which they might have been better fortified against them; for now, for want of such information, the poor wretches take old, rotten, damned heresies, for new light from the Spirit of Christ, and many are ready, upon that very notion and account, to run after them to their own perdition, little knowing

or thinking that ever these heresies were in the world before, and how they were used by Christ and his Church. Had they but known when and how their highly-honoured fancies did first arise, and what they brought forth, and how they sped, and what men they were that handed them down from Simon Magus till the time of their burial, the devil could not so easily have dug them up again, and have got religious men to make a feast of them.”* Notwithstanding the quaintness with which the sentiments are expressed, the truth they contain is so valuable, that few will be displeased with the garb in which it is clad. Having this authority, I shall feel the less reluctance to bring before you the forgotten and by-gone fancies of deluded men, as they will tend to show that there is no assumption of extraordinary power, no fancy of supernatural communication from on high, on the part of the modern

* P. 287, vol. xx. Baxter's Practical Works, edit. 1830.

claimants, which has not had already its counterpart, and been exposed and repudiated, and ultimately silenced, by the combined voices of the churches of God, under the real direction of that Spirit who has been grieved by those who have affected to pay Him the most abundant honour.

The first instance in which any thing similar to the present delusions is recorded as having appeared in the Church of Christ, is at so early a period as to excite our most unfeigned astonishment at the audacity of that evil spirit, who could thus dare to introduce the counterfeit, while the genuine coin, bearing the impress of the living God, was still before the eyes of all.

We are told by Eusebius,* quoting a writer antecedent even to himself, that A.D. 171,—therefore actually before the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit had departed from the Church,—there arose

* See Lardner's History of Heretics, p. 388, edit. 1780. 4to.

a sect called after the name of their founder, Montanists, who claimed for themselves direct inspiration from the Holy Ghost, “supposing God to have made some additional revelations by Montanus,” the head of the sect, “for the perfections of believers.”* They spake many foolish and fanatical things, “glorying in their own supposed superior sanctity and happiness, and were deluded with the most flattering expectations, reviling every church under heaven which did not pay homage to their pretended inspirations.”† It is a singular fact, that, as has been the case with most, if not all, pretenders to these miraculous powers, they held the *Millenarian views* ‡ very much in the same manner as they are held by the claimants of the same powers at the present day.

Of this sect Milner remarks, “It has ever been one of the greatest trials to men

* Lardner, *ut supra*.

† Eusebius, quoted by Milner, vol. i. p. 260.

‡ Tertul. adv. Marc., lib. iii. cap. 24, p. 499, B. C.

really led by the Spirit of God—besides the open opposition of the profane—to be obliged to encounter the subtle devices of Satan, who often raises up pretended illuminations, and so connects them with delusion, folly, wickedness, and self-conceit, that they expose true godliness to the imputation of enthusiasm, and to contempt and disgrace. We see here an instance of what has often been repeated, from that day to the present, in the Church of Christ; and Christians should never fail to do now, what they then did; viz., they should examine, expose, condemn, and separate themselves from such delusions: the enthusiasts of every age follow the pattern of Montanus in folly, pride, and uncharitableness. Nothing happens here but what is foretold in Scripture; and, in truth, delusions of this sort so generally accompany the real work of God, that wherever that appears, these very seldom fail to appear also.”*

* Church History, vol. i. p. 261.

The conduct of the Church, upon the subject of this sect, was so decisive, that one of the earliest Church historians scruples not to say, that “these prophets and their followers were condemned and excommunicated, opposed by most of the celebrated men of the time, and held in abhorrence by all the Christian brotherhood in the world.”* Such appears to have been the fate of the first pretenders to miraculous gifts, and we shall pass down the stream of Church history until we meet with a revival of these exploded claims at the time of the blessed Reformation. You will observe that the very nature of such delusions as these requires, in order that they may possess the smallest hope of success, that they should be presented at those periods when the Church is enjoying the most of the real influences of the Divine Spirit, and the promised presence of its blessed and glori-

* Eusebius, quoted in “Modern Claims to the Gifts,” &c., p. 104.

fied Head. In the darkest ages of the Church, when the ordinary influences of the Holy Ghost were little thought of, or sought after, what prospect would Satan have had of success, had he introduced such a delusion as that of Montanus? Who would for a moment have been led to believe, and to seek after extraordinary gifts, when even the ordinary gifts were neglected? For every age of the Church, as well as for every age and condition of the man, Satan has his appropriate temptation; and he who, when the influences of the Holy Spirit of God were beginning to be neglected and despised in the Church, introduced *Pelagianism*,* which would have excluded the operations of Divine grace altogether, prepared such delusions as those of which we are speaking, for the brighter and better ages of the Church, when the offices and gifts of the Spirit were made the prominent features in the discourses of her ministers,

* About A. D. 404, 5.

and the continually sought-for blessings in the prayers of her people.

Accordingly, no sooner did the day-star of the *Reformation* arise, and the blessed influence of God's good Spirit regain its appointed place in the faith and prayers of the Church, than we find Satan again employed in deluding men with the appearance of extraordinary gifts, and miraculous powers. Certain persons arose in Germany* under the name of the "Celestial Prophets," of whom the holy reformer, Melancthon,† gives the following account:—"I have given them a hearing, and it is astonishing what they tell of themselves; viz., that they are positively sent by God to teach; that they have familiar conferences with God; that they can foretell future events; and, to be brief, that they *are on a footing with Prophets and Apostles.*" "I cannot describe," he adds, "how I am moved by these lofty preten-

* About A. D. 1525.

† Milner's Church History, vol. v. p. 45.

sions." Like many of the true people of God at present, the meek and humble-minded Melancthon feared to oppose these pretenders, lest he should be found fighting against God. But Luther, to whose superior sagacity and decision Melancthon referred the case, at once replies, "When they bear record of themselves, we ought not implicitly to believe them ; but rather to try the spirits according to St. John's advice. As yet, I hear of nothing done or said by them, which exceeds the imitative powers of Satan. It is my particular wish that you would examine whether they can produce any PROOF of having a Divine commission. For God never sent any prophet, who was not either *called by proper persons*, or authorized by *special miracles*, no, not even his own Son." This great Reformer then adds, as his distinct and decided opinion, "Their *bare assertion* of a Divine afflatus is not a sufficient ground for your receiving them."

For a time, however, delusion and fana-

ticism prevailed, and many of all ranks united themselves to these false prophets, until Satan's purposes were abundantly answered by the Papists being led to attribute the excesses of these misguided men to the pure and holy spirit of the blessed Reformation, declaring contemptuously, "This is the fruit of the new doctrine; this is the fruit of Luther's gospel."* We may judge from this result, what was at least one of the objects for which Satan laboured; viz., by erecting, for a time, a false standard, ultimately to cast contempt upon the pure and undefiled religion of the Gospel. And thus it is in every age, only let the devil prevail upon men to receive error instead of truth, and he will contrive, in many cases at least, that when they discover the error, they shall discard indiscriminately both error and truth together.

Let us for a moment place in juxtaposition with these false prophets the ex-

* Milner, vol. v. p. 216, note.

perience of that truly great and eminent servant of God, Martin Luther.

If there have been an individual, from the days of the Apostles to the present hour, whose peculiar dangers and difficulties might have needed, and whose wonderful faith and exalted piety might have claimed a supernatural manifestation of the Divine power, or a peculiar endowment of miraculous gifts, I imagine that the whole Protestant Church would, as with one voice, exclaim, Such a man was *Martin Luther*. Observe, then, not only how plainly, how boldly, how convincingly, he opposed all pretenders to extraordinary gifts, but how completely he disavowed any such pretensions on his own part. He says, not indeed in a spirit of boasting, but as St. Paul before him had been compelled to do, to clear himself from the charges of false teachers, "I stood forward, in a very critical and dangerous moment, as a public disputant at Leipsic before a numerous

audience. At Augsburg I appeared before my enemies without a safe conduct; and at Worms I looked both the emperor and the whole German nobility in the face, though I knew the public faith had been violated on a former not very dissimilar occasion. Yet *I* made no pretence of hearing voices from heaven, or of being possessed of *supernatural talents*, or of having any thing of that spirit which has appeared at Alstead.* How valuable a testimony is this to the Church of God! The most exalted believer, probably, who has appeared during the last fifteen centuries, not only decidedly condemns the assumption of extraordinary powers in others, but completely and most unhesitatingly *disavows them for himself*. Surely we have cause to thank God that he permitted these pretenders to trouble the Church in the ages that are past, that his people might possess so invaluable a testimony to meet all similar pretensions in the ages to come.

* Milner, vol. v. p. 208.

About a century* later precisely the same pretensions were advanced in Silesia, where both men and women, apparently pious and devoted persons, asserted that they spake by immediate inspiration from God. Happily, however, they ventured upon *predictions*, of which a short time proved the falsehood, and their leader was banished his country as a false prophet,† and the sect dispersed.

But perhaps the pretender to divine inspiration, resembling most closely those of the present day, appeared in our own country in the days of the Commonwealth, in the person of George Fox, the founder of the sect of the Friends. This man does not hesitate in his Journal‡ expressly to

* A.D. 1626.

† See “Modern Claims,” &c., p. 154, and for many other similar instances.

‡ “A Journal, or historical account of the life, travels, sufferings, Christian experiences, and labour of love, in the work of the ministry, of that ancient, eminent and faithful servant of Jesus Christ, George Fox.” Fol. 1765, p. vii.

assume to himself the same power which was bestowed upon the Apostles and Prophets of old, and which is claimed by so many at present. These are his words, "These things I did not see by the help of man, nor by letter . . . but I saw them in the light of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by his immediate Spirit and power, *as did the holy men of God*, by whom the Holy Scriptures were written."* He also instructs his followers not to let "the sons and daughters, nor the handmaids be stopped in their prophesyings, nor the young men in their visions, nor the old men in their dreams, but let the Lord be glorified in all."† Distinctly asserting that both he and his people "had the *same power* and spirit that the Apostles had and were in," and that "in that power and spirit the Lord gave them dominion over all."‡

This pretender declared that all the great events of his time were revealed to him before they happened: the death of

* Vide Fox's Journal, p. 24.

† Ibid. p. 249.

‡ Ibid. p. 331.

Cromwell, the restoration of Charles II., the great fire of London, and many others. It is curious, however, that none of these predictions were promulged by him until *after* the several events had taken place, while the only unfulfilled prophecy which he ever ventured to publish has remained unfulfilled to the present hour.*

Sufficient has, then, we trust, been gathered from the experience of the Church to demonstrate that this is no new thing that has happened to us; that whenever there has been a revival of true religion, whenever the offices and the gifts of the Holy Ghost have been brought prominently before the minds of Christians, as the objects of their desire, and the subjects of their prayers, those also are the periods when Satan has presented delusions similar to the present to mislead the unstable, and to perplex and harass the minds of the real children of God. Indeed, instead of considering the present

* Vide Fox's Journal, p. 263.

“ manifestations ” in this parish (grievous although for a time their effects may be) as any cause for despondency or alarm, I own I cannot but look upon them, from the past experience of the Church, as among the most encouraging proofs that the real work of the Spirit’s *ordinary* influences is flourishing among us ; and that when the tares which the enemy is now sowing shall have withered away, the good seed shall remain unto our children’s children, bringing forth fruit an hundred-fold through many succeeding generations to the honour and glory of God.

We now arrive at the last test by which we proposed to “ try the spirits whether they were of God ; ” viz. :—

III. By their own professions.

It is obvious that there cannot be a more favourable test by which to try any individual than by his own professions ; and yet, in the present instance, so complete is the case against the modern claimants, that if we even try them thus, by com-

paring their own confessions with the written Word of God, we shall find quite as much out of their own mouths to condemn them, as we have already seen either from the testimony of Scripture, or of the Church of God.

The first great characteristic, then, of these alleged gifts is, that they are generally *uncontrollable* by those who are the subjects of them. As a proof of this, we are informed that when the head of this new sect thought proper to forbid the “gifted people,” as they are termed, from speaking in his church, “one of the sisters, finding she was *unable to restrain herself*, and respecting the regulation of the Church, rushed into the vestry, and gave vent to utterance;” while another ran out of the church for the same purpose.* Again, we are told “that the gifted persons declared that the power which *compelled* them to speak acted on ‘*the end of their tongues.*’” While we find one who was for

* “Unknown Tongues,” &c., by G. Pilkington, Second Edition, 8vo., 1831.

a time led captive by the same delusion, declaring of himself, “By a constraint I cannot describe, I was *made to speak*.”* And again, on another occasion, when the leader of this new sect was asked, “if they could *not restrain* the tongue and utter English?” he said, “No.”

Now all these things are totally and entirely at variance with *every* instance which the Word of God has handed down to us of the *real* inspirations of his good Spirit. We are told expressly by the apostle, that the “Spirits of the prophets *are subject* to the prophets;”† and again, “If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the *first hold his peace*.”‡ It is, therefore, plain that the *true* prophets of God had the Spirit which spake within them in perfect subjection;

* Indeed this language is common to all; thus Mr. Irving expresses it, “He was *made to declare* many words, &c. ;” and again, “Mrs. C. was *made to speak* in a tongue with great authority and strength.” —*Baxter’s Narrative*, p. 105.

† 1 Cor. xiv. 32.

‡ Ibid. 29, 30.

and that they could “hold their peace” when they desired, or the Spirit of God would never have thus mocked them by the mouth of the apostle, by *commanding* them to do so.

It is singular that, while the Word of God is so clearly opposed to them upon this point, the pretenders in *all ages* should have committed so great an error as to profess to be under an *irresistible* power ; accordingly we find the fathers of Christianity condemning the heretics of their days, upon their own profession, 1600 years ago, precisely as we are enabled to do at the present moment. Hear the evidence of Origen upon this point: he says, “The prophets did not, as some suppose, lose their understanding, and speak from a constraint of the Spirit.”* “If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by,” says the apostle, “let the first hold his peace.” And again: “Any one who has the spirit of prophecy is not *com-*

* Orig. in Ezech., c. xvi. Hom. 6, init., tom. i. pp. 636-7.

pelled to speak involuntarily, *as those who have unclean spirits*, but speaks when he pleases and reason requires: and when it shall not appear a fit opportunity to speak, is silent, well knowing there is a time to be silent and a time to speak.”*

But let us once more turn to their own professions, and try them upon another point.

It appears, then, not only that they are *constrained* to speak, whether willing or unwilling, but that oftentimes they neither know, nor profess to know, *what* they speak. Thus we are told in the statement before alluded to, “I heard *** say to her neighbour, in a low voice, ‘I didn’t speak in English, did I?’” therefore clearly not knowing what she had spoken. While one, who has himself escaped from this fearful delusion, plainly declares, “*If I understood not the words I was made to utter*, it was consistent with the idea of the utterances of the Spirit that deep and mysterious things should be spoken.’

* Origen in Rom., c. viii., lib. 7, tom 2, pp. 567-8.

And again, one now speaking as a prophetess amongst them, has declared, if she were “to attempt to *exercise her understanding* upon what she utters, she should soon stumble.”* How different is all this from the example of the true apostles and prophets of God, and yet strange to say, again so perfectly in unison with the pretenders and heretics of the early ages, that we have again the answers of the fathers at a distance of between fourteen and fifteen centuries perfectly conclusive upon the point. We find Origen,† A. D. 235—247, distinctly says, “The throwing her who prophesies into an ecstasy, so *that she does not understand herself*, is not the work of the Divine Spirit.” Again, Basil the Great,‡ A. D. 370 :—“But there are some who say that they prophesy in a state of ecstasy, their *human understanding* being overshadowed

* “Narrative of Facts,” by Baxter, p. 127.

† Origen contra Cels., lib. 7, sub init.

‡ Basil. Comment. in Is., vol. i. p. 806.

by the Spirit. But this is irreconcilable with their boast of having the Divine presence with them, that should abstract the mind of him who is divinely inspired." So, again,* Epiphanius of Constantia, A.D. 375:—"They have cut themselves off, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, saying that it behoves us to receive the gifts." "But whatever the prophets spoke, they spoke intelligently, understanding what they were saying." "But what these people profess to prophesy, they appear to do neither in a calm state of mind, nor understanding what they say, for their words are extraordinary and incoherent, and have no propriety." Lastly, St. Chrysostom: "This is the peculiar mark of a soothsayer, to be in an exstasy, to *suffer constraint*, to be under a violent impulse, to be exceedingly moved, to be agitated like one mad. But a *prophet* is not so, but speaks every thing with a sober judg-

* Epiphanius. adv. Hæres. in hæres. 45. vol. i. p. 402.

ment and a sound state of mind, and understanding what is spoken. So that even before the event, you may distinguish from hence between a *soothsayer* and a *prophet*.”*

We have, then, *two distinctive marks* given upon their own confession, according to the testimony of men whose veracity has never been impeached, in which the present claimants *differ* widely from those whom the Church of God has in all ages recognised as the *prophets* of God, while they *agree* as *closely* with those whom the Church has, in all ages, pronounced to be under deep and dangerous delusion.

I shall, in conclusion, apply myself, as I proposed in the former Discourse, to resolve “some difficulties which have arisen in the minds of many candid inquirers into this deeply important subject.”

The first inquiry which I shall endeavour to answer, because it is one that has staggered more minds, and obtained more proselytes to this delusion, than any other, is

* Chrys. Hom. 29. vol. iii. p. 430.

this : *Can it be possible, that when God's children ask Him for bread, He should give them a stone or a scorpion?* If not, say the inquirers, then since many of the claimants of these extraordinary gifts are certainly among the children of God, and they have long been seeking these gifts, would He thus have given them over to delusion ?

The answer to this appears plain and undeniable.

We are quite ready to acknowledge that God's true children can never ask *bread*, and receive a stone or a scorpion. We are equally willing to admit, that many of these claimants are God's true children. But we deny that they have been asking for *bread*. In seeking for miraculous powers, for extraordinary gifts, we contend that they are *not* seeking for *bread*. Such things are needful neither for the life of the *body*, nor for the life of the *soul* ; and if they presume to ask them, they cannot be surprised that their heavenly Father either absolutely denies their request, or

gives them that which is an evidence of His anger rather than His love, and which shall turn to them as a judgment rather than a blessing. The limit which the Holy Ghost has himself assigned to prayer may be discovered in the revealed Word (1 John v. 14.), “ This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask any thing *according to His will*, he heareth us.” We may, therefore, pray earnestly, we may pray fervently, we may pray perseveringly, and yet we may not pray “ *according to the will of God*,” and if this be the case, it will be no breach of God’s promise, no failure of God’s faithfulness that our petitions remain unanswered.

Men ask that which God has never encouraged them to ask, and God gives that, of which the possession forms their severest punishment. I say, in the present instance, men have asked that which they are not (at least by Apostolical example) encouraged to ask. For it is well worthy of our notice, that although there are scattered through the epistles many beautiful

examples of prayers by the Apostles, for all the *graces* of the Holy Spirit to be poured upon their converts, I believe it would be difficult to find a single instance in which they ever asked for these *miraculous powers or extraordinary gifts*.

Think not, then, that when you are tempted to seek such things, you are asking *bread*; think not, that because you have obtained the semblance of what you sought, or even were you to obtain the reality itself, you necessarily enjoy God's accompanying blessing; the fate of the Israelites may be your own; God may give you "your heart's desire," and yet send "leanness withal into your soul."

The last difficulty which I shall notice, and which is closely allied to the former, is the following:—

It is said, many of the claimants of these extraordinary gifts are truly pious and devoted people; can we then suppose that God would suffer them to *fall into error*? We would reply to this inquiry, by making another. Was not David the man after

God's own heart ? And did not God permit him to be "drawn aside of his own lusts, and enticed," in fact, to fall into open, dreadful sin ? It cannot be denied. Unless, then, it can be shown, that errors in doctrine are worse than errors in morals, there appears to be no more substantial reason why God should permit His people to be drawn aside, and enticed by the *lusts of the flesh*, than by the *lusts of the mind*. If God permits His own people occasionally to fall into *sin*, we can have no assurance that he will never permit them to fall into *error*.

We believe, then, that no reality of Christian profession, no length of Christian servitude, no fervour of feeling in the cause of our Redeemer, is sufficient to exempt God's children from the lot of all mortality. As surely as that the truest professor shall, in God's good time, drop into the grave, because he carries about him a body of sin and death : so certainly, and for the same reason, may the truest professor, even one who

shall never finally perish, and whom none shall pluck out of our Father's hand, fall either into error or into sin. Else vain had been the Saviour's caution, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." "What I say unto you, I say unto *all*, Watch;" and false had been the Church's dictum, "After we have received the Holy Ghost we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin." (Art. 16.) That some of these persons, then, or that all of them, are the people of God, would no more prove that their present gross delusions were Bible truths, than it would prove that their hard speeches against all who differ from them are evidences of the gentleness of Christ, or their malediction of the ministers of the church of England,* among the lovely and peaceful fruits of the Spirit.

My Christian brethren, my *desire* has been to lay before you, in this investigation, "*the mind of the Spirit*," unfettered by any preconceived opinions, and unbiassed by any

* See Appendix.

human system, or human partialities; the result at which I have arrived has not been reached hastily or carelessly, but after much consideration, and deep and anxious enquiry, and, I trust, not without sincere though imperfect prayer. Had I been brought by the Spirit of God to a different conclusion, I trust I should have had grace as plainly, as clearly, and as fearlessly, to have stated that result to you as I do the present. Every thing I have read, whether by the opponents of these extraordinary claims, or by the claimants themselves, has only led me onward, without the passage of one wavering thought, or one uncertain feeling across my mind, to this complete and entire conviction, that “the spirits” when weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, when exposed to the test of the experience of the Church, when tried by their own confessions, have “*been found utterly wanting*”—wanting in their *foundation*, in scriptural promises on which to build—wanting in their *superstructure*, in every resemblance to those “holy men of

old who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"—wanting in their *object and end*, in all that can promote the glory of God and the welfare of his people.

The result of the trial of the spirits, therefore, is, that we believe that they are "*not of God*," but whether the offspring of satanical delusion, or of the natural infirmity of highly-wrought and over-excited minds, we pretend not to pronounce. It is enough, that if our conclusion be correct, they will "*come to nought*." I now hope to be enabled to dismiss this subject from my pulpit ministrations for ever, only calling upon you all, in your families and in private, to be earnest and unceasing in prayer to our Heavenly Father, both for those who, while they differ from us, are still the objects of our heartfelt pity and regard, and for ourselves, that in these days of delusion God would lead us into all truth, bless us with a sound mind, keep us from all error, and "grant us, by the same Spirit, to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his

holy comfort, through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with him, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end."*

* Collect for Whitsunday.

APPENDIX.

It had been the Author's intention to have quoted passages from the different works published by the party alluded to, and from their accredited organ the "*Morning Watch*," to exemplify these statements; but, after much consideration, he is willing rather to forego the advantage his argument would derive from such specimens, than to enter upon so irritating a topic.

At the same time he cannot, in self-justification, but allude to some of the very remarkable statements contained in the "*Narrative of the Circumstances which led to the setting up of the Church of Christ at Albury*;" at page 17 is the following passage:—"I had been in treaty for the purchase of a pew in Trinity Church, Chelsea; but finding the Minister there *preach against the work of the Holy Spirit*, I withdrew from it." The Author cannot but protest against such an accusation, which, although "printed for private circulation only," is carrying throughout the religious society of the country a charge which, if true, would be one of the heaviest under which a Minister of the Gospel could fall. He is content, however, to leave his Ministerial character in higher hands, but would suggest to the Author of the *Narrative* the consideration whether a difference upon a point which all must at least allow to be a contested point, ought to have been denominated by so harsh a phrase. Few men respect the Author of that *Narrative* more than the writer of these *Discourses*, and therefore few lament more that the pen which could so overflow with love in the view of "*Social duties*," should have been so deeply dipped in gall in the *Preface* and notes to "*The General Delusion of Christians*," &c., and in all its other productions since the estrangement of the writer.

But this charge against himself as an individual is as nothing compared with the following sweeping malediction upon the clergy

at Brighton or at Albury* who do not admit the claims of this new sect:—"On their preachers the word of the Lord has come to pass, and they are blighted: no spiritual children are more begotten; the ordinances no longer convey life; the streams are turned to blood; and the reservoirs produce nothing but noxious reptiles. They who still attend the preachers have complained to me of their being altogether altered, both in matter and manner, for which they are unable to assign any cause. We have the mind of Christ, and know all things: we therefore know it is because his word of judgment has gone forth upon them; the east wind from the Lord has blighted them. 'A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and an howling of the principal of the flock, is heard; for the Lord has spoiled their pastures.'" But whether this passage refer to Brighton or to Albury is of little import, for the writer of the Narrative, who appears to speak officially, and indeed acknowledges himself to be a *Bishop* of the new sect, see page 30, says distinctly, "Thus has the *Christian dispensation* run its course, as the Jewish did before it, in two consecutive streams." p. 31. "The knell of the Church of Jerusalem began to be rung when Cornelius and his household spake with tongues and prophesied: the *dispensation commenced and terminated* with similar events, and the knell of the Church of England tolled when, on the 26th of December, by the ordination of the Angel of the Church of Christ at Albury, *her priesthood was set aside*." p. 31. "Popery was the apostacy of the flesh; Protestantism is the apostacy of the intellect: out of this harlot system is the last form of Antichrist produced—the intellectual man of sin; as the Papacy produced the fleshly man of sin." p. 32.

Upon the tendency and spirit of these extracts, no comment need be offered; but few will read them, it is hoped, without an earnest petition at a throne of pardoning and restraining grace for the writer of them, and for those who are following in his present erratic course.

The Author would acknowledge, with much gratitude, the valuable aid he has derived, with the permission of Mr. Goode, from his learned and admirable work, so often referred to.

* It is not very clear, from the context, to the preachers at which of these two places the passage refers, though it seems probable that Albury is intended.



